

Music Plan
2017-2018



St Kilian's Community School,
Ballywaltrim,
Bray,
Co. Wicklow

The aims of the music syllabus are strongly supported in the school where we try to promote a culture of creative enjoyable engagement with music:

- ✚ To promote through creative involvement in music and the pursuit of excellence the development of personality.
- ✚ To develop musical sensitivity and the critical and imaginative faculties.
- ✚ To encourage social awareness and an understanding of the artistic views of others through musical activities.

- ✚ To advance the musical skills and concepts acquired at the Primary level so that all pupils, including the very talented and those with special needs, can engage in worthwhile musical activities enjoyably and profitably.
(From the JC Music Syllabus, p. 5)

PROVISION FOR MUSIC

JUNIOR CYCLE

Junior Certificate Music Option (4 times a week)

For the music option students, there are clear syllabus aims and learning outcomes requiring the integration and assessment of performance, composition and listening components. There are varying different courses pertaining to set/choice songs and set/choice works which are to be followed each year, with central elements which remain the same e.g. composing requirements. Performance really depends on the composition of the groups and their own talents which have to be developed to the best of their ability and the syllabus allows for a lot of flexibility in this regard. This suits students of all abilities to be the best that they can be through active music-making. We have 36 students taking music as an option for Junior Certificate:

First Year:

10 students: 3 boys and 8 girls

Second Year:

22 students: 12 boys and 10 girls

Third Year:

15 students: 4 boys and 11 girls

JCSP Music (twice a week)

These students have learning targets in four specific areas relating to music. While these students are not presenting for examination or assessment, I still use these targets as guidelines in the preparation of work with these classes. These areas are:

1. Listening to recorded extracts and giving a variety of descriptive responses using simple technical and non-technical language.

2. Engage in basic music-making, either with voice or another instrument.
3. Composing basic rhythmic phrases using staff notation.
4. Composing basic rhythmic and melodic phrases using staff notation.

JCSP First Year:

14 students: 10 boys and 4 girls

PROVISION FOR MUSIC
SENIOR CYCLE MUSIC

TY Senior Cycle Music Option (4 Times a week)

14: 5 boys and 9 girls

For TY music option, I cover a number of different topics:

1. Music and Development Education: Social issues and human rights addressed in music.
2. Music Technology: MuseScore
3. Music History: Music as it develops through the ages from medieval times down to the present day.
4. Music and the Holocaust: Music that was composed and performed in the concentration camps in World War II.
5. Foundations of Leaving Certificate Music: Developing core elements like aural memory, clapping exercises, rhythm exercises, musical literacy.
6. Music performance and practical music-making especially in the organizing of the Soundwaves Music Festival in lining up activities, inviting guests, presenting guests to audiences, doing auditions with primary school, getting the school community involved in LipSync battles, song contests, Lunch-Time to Shine Special, designing certificates, presenting certificates, vouchers and/or goody bags to all participants.
7. Project work and outreach activities: Organising something for Christmas; carol singing for a charity e.g. St Vincent de Paul.

TY Choir (once a week)

All year groups approximately 24 students per group. Our repertoire for this includes songs from musicals, charts, for enjoyment and performance in class and school-based activities.

Fifth Year Music

21 students: 10 boys and 11 girls (5 times a week)

Sixth Year Music

14 students: 4 boys and 10 girls (5 times a week)

These students are following the Leaving Certificate programme due for examination in 2018/2019. As such, the three components of music composition, performance and listening are integrated elements in the programme following the prescribed set works – Bach, Tchaikovsky, Queen and Barry – melodic composition, harmony, and traditional Irish music. The Leaving Certificate Music programme allows students to allocate 25% to the three individual components and the remaining marks to an area of their own strength in one of the three options. Music technology will be a strong option for a majority of these students due to poor performance standard or lack of confidence in performance. There is a 50% technology option for students for LC. We will follow *Muse Score*, a free music software package sanctioned for use for examination by the Department of Education, which can also be used by students at home on their own computers. This is also being facilitated by booking the Computer Room to work within school time on this programme.

MUSIC LITERACY

Music as a language in its own right has its own symbols, expressions, construction, grammar, phrasing. Music literacy incorporates all of the following and many more words which are part of the music vocabulary of the student over the full range of music education at post primary level. It is important that these concepts are clearly explained, understood and applied in different contexts to allow the students to get as broad an understanding as possible. To this end, methodologies will include ways of highlighting these words, through word searches, quizzes, flash-cards, glossaries, etc. but all the time in context of the music with which most of these words are associated.

Music Literacy includes the following terms:

Pitch	Timbre
Intervals	Mood
Texture	Happy
Homophonic	Sad
Polyphonic	Dramatic
Monophonic	Mysterious
Musical Features	Frightening
Tempo	Orchestra
Andante	Jazz Band
Allegro	Irish music
Adagio	Jig
Moderato	Reel
Rubato	Hornpipe
Accelerando	Suite
Ritardando	Dance movements

Presto	Functional dance music
Dynamics	Non-functional dance music
Piano	Carols
Pianissimo	Arias
Forte	Choruses
Fortissimo	Soprano
Melodic features	Alto
Ascending scale/motif	Tenor
Descending scale/motif	Bass
Triadic Melody	G/treble Clef
Step movement	F/Bass Clef
Leaps	Viola Clef
Steps and leaps	Love song
Performing medium	Aisling/Patriotic song
Style/genre	Geantraí
Classical	Goltraí
Baroque	Suantraí
Romantic	Dandling songs
Intermezzo	Symphony
Suite	Concerto
Prelude	Overture
Ballad	Oratorio
Arco	Cantata
Pizzicato	Musical
Col Legno	Opera
Art music	Folk songs
Orchestrally accompanied music	Theme and Variations
Major	Canons
Minor	Rounds
Cadences	Imitation
Sharps	Unison
Flats	Counter melody
Naturals	Ternary
Anacrusis	Strophic
Upbeat	Through-composed
Drone	Binary
Discord	Chromatic notes
Dissonance	12 note series
Consonance	Aleatoric music
Rondo	Sonata form
Da Capo Aria	Minuet and Trio
Tonality	Transposition

NUMERACY IN MUSIC

By its nature, music is numeracy-related and it is often said that there is a strong correlation between maths and music. The following are some of the ways in which numeracy is evident and can be emphasized in music:

- + Keeping time in music, time signatures e.g. 6/8, 9/8, 12/8, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4.
- + Differentiating between different time signatures etc., simple and compound time signatures
- + Note values – semiquaver, quaver, crotchet, minim, semibreve.
- + Corresponding rests
- + Syncopation and rhythm changes adding dots to notes, or tying notes together
- + Duration
- + Intervals, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, octave; major and minor intervals
- + Filling in missing notes in bars
- + Dates of composers, dates of compositions
- + Numbers in the songs/works
- + Transposition of music for instruments like the Clarinet in Bb or Viola. Working out pitches a tone apart.
- + Tones, semitones and microtones; scales
- + Lines and spaces – five lines and four spaces in treble and bass clef.
- + Combinations of instruments, e.g. trio, quartet, quintet, octet etc.
- + Learning songs with numbers included

DIFFERENTIATION

It is important to be aware of students in the class who are very proficient and those who have little proficiency, those who have innate musical ability and those who are musically challenged. The learning support and behaviour for learning support teacher have provided very good indicators as to what best suits the learning needs of students. Activities need to take into account these differences along with differentiation in practical music-making activities to cater for students with physical disabilities.

Assessment for Learning

Putting up the learning intention on the board before the start of every lesson and referring to it at the end can reiterate the important points of learning in that class. Feedback and feed-forward, encouraging what is right and identifying the areas of improvement, are very important in assessment for learning.

School Self-Evaluation

Incorporating reflective practice as a practitioner is really important. Some classes can go really well and I have to look and see why and other classes may not have gone so well and I have to ask myself the same thing. I have to be aware if one student is having difficulty understanding something or if the whole class is having that difficulty. The chances are that it's something in my teaching which needs to change if it affects the entire group. It is important then to adapt, to

change, to be humble enough to see what is going well and what is not and beginning again where it's not so good.

THE MUSIC ROOM SPACE

The Music Room: The structure is not ideal and there are some challenges due to leaks if there is heavy rain! There are three main sections in the music room.

- (i) Main section is where you have the board which can be used for ICT and for interactive possibilities for students where they can stick things up on the board as appropriate; the manuscript part of the board is useful for exercises requiring it.
- (ii) To the side of the room are storage facilities with class sets of books, exam papers, scores, music stands, some instruments
- (iii) On the other side, we have a performance space complete with a musical mural painted by a TY student Andrei Yordanev from January to May 2017. This space will also have performance platforms during the year to facilitate more concerts and make that a designated performing area.
- (iv) A storage room is there for instruments, amps etc., but storage is inadequate for the instruments there.

Displays in the room will be updated with student work, etc. A new floor was put into the room this year which is wonderful and gives a fresh feeling to the space. I have also re-structured my tables to facilitate more cooperative learning methodologies.

RESOURCES

The school is very fortunate to have instruments for the students' use: guitars, keyboards, bodhráns, ukeleles, recorders, tin whistles, accordions, banjos, percussion set, concertinas, congas, bongos, drum kit. Use of instruments in class time is recommended for practical music-making. All students love the opportunity to make music in class. It is particularly effective for the JCSP and LCA classes who really have no interest in theory but want something more like classroom workshopping activities. Some greater amount of storage is necessary for proper security of instruments and prevention of damage. There is only one computer in the designated music room so that for technology in the classroom, we have to go to the computer room. Input will be manually with the computer's mouse or key pad. We have acquired three Midi keyboards to use in conjunction with the computers. More instruments will have to be purchased due to the growing demand for music as an academic subject within the school.

CHALLENGES

✚ Stickability – students have very little patience with learning or with repetition. They need to be constantly changing and they don't like when

you're taking time to teach people what to do so that you can have a performance of some coherent music!

✚ Confidence in performance is a massive issue with students looking down at the ground, afraid to sing out, putting their hands up to their faces to hide in front of a group, or singing very, very quietly and barely audibly.

✚ Challenging negative perceptions of themselves: recently, I was told by the TY class that they could never do any competitions because they were 'the dopey school'. It caused me some very disturbing nights wondering how to curb that attitude. There is something deeply embedded in how they see themselves and the very low barometer of achievement which they set for themselves. It is something I feel needs to be constantly challenged. This can be very hard work sometimes because it's like an unspoken societal norm which is like a brick wall in terms of progress. This is the biggest challenge and is very closely allied to self-esteem and confidence issues. They have talent but they do not believe that they could be as good as anyone else so it's easier not to bother trying as a consequence. As a music teacher, it is the most frustrating part of the job.

✚ Allied to the above point, encouraging LC students to stick with the Higher Level paper and material: I often get the following articulated to me: 'Oh I don't need to do that for the course I'm getting into next year so I shouldn't have to do it.' It's a minimalistic attitude which says to me 'Just let me do barely enough to get me by... why would I bother to do any more than that'. It's very frustrating especially when you know some students have much greater ability.

✚ Absenteeism and no shows: Some students who are brilliant singers are often not good attenders and even when given key roles for certain events are not likely to turn up. For me, it's about keeping faith in them anyway, and not giving up on them. But I do get disappointed and I tell them so. It's a hard lesson for them on commitment but it's a very important life-skill for them as well. It's difficult because it goes against the grain for some of the students.

✚ The structure of the room is strange. There is little natural light with only skylights providing illumination from outside. I can open up the partition leading into the canteen on some days if necessary or just to open up the space.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is ongoing in class through written and practical work and homework. Tests/examinations follow the pattern of questions that are in the Junior Certificate so they get accustomed to the language, layout etc. There are multi-choice questions, paragraph questions, aural questions and, for first years and weaker students, some visual questions identifying certain things from a

range of options. They also have a practical component to their music examinations.

Challenges:

Students who have a poor attendance record fall very far behind and it's hard for them to make up lost ground. How can I encourage attendance more?

Students who refuse to engage in practical music-making: for confidence reasons or principled objections, I need to find ways of addressing that so it's not a confrontational thing but something which is encouraged.

MUSIC ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SCHOOL

1. Music Committee within the school: There is one music student from each year group selected for the Music Committee for the school. This is to encourage more active music making among the student body and giving the students more responsibility in putting programmes together, introducing acts, compering, setting up the performing space, ensuring that all acts are ready to perform, and getting lunch-vouchers which are an incentive for students to participate.

2. Monthly Lunch-Time to Shine

An opportunity for an informal concert over lunch-time. Students sing, play instruments, and entertain a canteen full of students over lunch-time for one lunch-time each month. It's always a very enjoyable experience. Fortunately, students do the sound engineering for these concerts loading backing tracks and linking up the school sound system with computer.

3. Soundwaves Music Festival

Last year was the first year of this festival. Each lunch-time was crammed with different activities e.g. LipSync Battles; Lunch-Time to Shine Special; Song Contest; Joint Talent Show-case between the 4th, 5th and 6th classes of St Fergal's Primary School and our students; invited guests like Anne-Marie O'Farrell (harpist), her son Steph (guitarist), Redmond O'Toole (Brahms 8-string guitar); Tim Doyle (Uilleann Pipes); Ross Scanlon (Voice workshops). Also, I created a folder with cross-curricular ideas for music in conjunction with each subject within the school and lessons and resources for teachers to use that week. These events were made possible due to the involvement of teachers, other members of staff and guests as well as all the students who participated. On the basis of the fact that we had it so late last year (in May), we decided to put it earlier in the school year when it might not create so much disruption within the school, hence it is taking place from 16-20 October 2017.

3. Collaboration with different departments within the school:

(i) RE Department:

- + Opening of the year liturgy in September;
- + Memorial service in November;
- + Christmas/nativity play in December;
- + Carol singing for charities in December;

- + Paschal service at Easter time;
- + Graduation at the end of the academic year;
- + End of year ecumenical service for conclusion of the academic year.

(ii) Home School Liaison Teacher and parents: for the Christmas Fair and for some instrumental lessons with parents. This was initiated last year and was most enjoyable for all who participated.

(iii) Interdisciplinary collaboration: For cultural day in January, performing music in different languages and from different countries representing our cultural diversity in the school.

(iv) Irish Department: for Seachtain na Gaeilge in March. Focus on Irish dances, songs, performance and school céili!

(v) Maths Department for Maths week: Exploring music with numbers included in their texts

4. Choir on Lunch-times and other times as necessary

5. Traditional Irish Group – takes place once a week coming up to school events involving music

6. Christmas choir and band: coming up to Christmas

7. Christmas Concert on day of Christmas holidays. The school's very own X Factor!

8. Working with the LC students, choir and instrumentalists for Graduation

9. Music Generation instruments and tuition: This year we have approximately 15 students signed up for Music Generation after school. Students are taking lessons in piano, keyboard, guitar and drums.

10. Emmanuel, Archdiocesan Liturgical Music Commission initiative for secondary schools. We have twenty students signed on for this. The students learn twenty songs over lunch-time practices and perform them with 700 other students and a live band in the Helix in early March 2018. Some students will be auditioned for solo parts for this concert.

11. Other musical experiences deemed suitable and educationally relevant for students e.g. trip to the National Concert Hall this year for the LC set works, e.g. Bach, Tchaikovsky, Barry, Queen.

MUSIC CPD

I am a current member of the Post Primary Music Teachers' Association (PPMTA).

I will be attending the **PPMTA meetings** and also any of the curricular Music workshops provided usually at weekends or after school by the **PDST** particularly for the new JC Music Specification being implemented from September 2018.

DOCUMENTS FOR REFERENCE

- + Music syllabi for Music for examination in JC and LC; LCA Music syllabus, and JCSP Music Syllabus
- + Music Subject Guidelines
- + Examination Papers and Examiner Reports
- + *Looking at Music: Teaching and Learning in Post-Primary Schools* (published by the Inspectorate, DES, 2008)
- + *Music Guidelines for Teaching of Students with Mild Learning Disabilities in Primary Schools* (NCCA)
- + PDST and PPMTA websites for resources, sharing of good practice and networking